

Gardening Myths & Legends – Which ones really work?¹

Everyone has a cure for the problems in your garden. But, most of the time their remedy is not treating the real problem – just the symptom. And, many times the remedy is making the problem worse. There are even some claims out there which are downright dangerous to plants and gardeners alike. Below are some of the claims. During the presentation, I will show you the results of my research as to what the real problem is with an explanation of where it came from.

In the space between the lines, make your notes about why you think the myth or legend is true or not true. Then, note the research-based results shared in the presentation. Some of these items are not true.

Miracle Cures?

- Latest and greatest stuff that...**kills bugs**, increases fruit, prevent weeds, **aerates clay soil, prevents disease**, is 100% organic, adds essential nutrients, **attract the good insects**
- Are you looking for results or entertainment?
- What is a chemical?

Propagation

- Can I start a rose in a potato? Should I use a quart jar to cover a plant to get it to root?
- Do we need to soak our seeds?
- What are standard propagation practices?

Soils

- Is it ok to use coffee grounds in compost? As mulch?
- Why would I plant a penny with my hydrangea?
- Grandpa told me to plant a nail with every tomato plant. Why?
- Wood ashes are a great addition to the garden. Really?
- Epsom Salts are a cure all for countless garden problems. Why?
- Why would I ever need a soil test?

¹ By Eric Barrett, OSU Extension Educator, barrett.90@osu.edu

Sanitation

- Why must we sucker and tie tomatoes?
- A drop of bleach an aspirin and a little wine will keep cut flowers fresh, right?
- A bleach solution is the best thing to sanitize your pruners with.
- As long as I water in the morning (and not the evening), my plants will thrive!
- Baking soda will kill fungus problems on roses and other plants.

Weed Control

- Mulch – Does it really have weed seeds and termites in it?
- Landscape cloth is the best way to keep weeds at bay.
- Organic weed control is only possible with a hoe or other cultivation.
- I've heard that salt and vinegar (not mixed together) kill weeds. Is that true?

Insects

- You must have ants on your peonies for them to bloom properly.
- You can use dish detergent instead of paying extra for insecticidal soap.

A few other areas of gardening...

- You have to put drainage materials in your containers and pots.
- If you get poison ivy - don't scratch because that causes it to spread.
- Aluminum pie plates will keep the birds out of your garden all summer long.

Know your stuff!

- Air & Sunlight will indeed reduce disease pressure in the garden!
- Knowing how to search for the right information will help you to prove or disprove the latest craze.
 - Call your local Extension Office or Ask a Master Gardener
 - Use the right search terms: i.e. - 'Tomato diseases' Add 'Extension' or 'University Extension'
- If it sounds too good...